



A periodic report from
THE NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY PROGRAM
THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

NDL Web Site Enjoys Record Usage Following *Parade* Magazine Article

A Sept. 29 *Parade* magazine article about the Library's National Digital Library (NDL) Program encouraged the American public to "Click On to Our Nation's History." That is precisely what *Parade* readers did.

Furnished with the Library's Internet address, the public put down their newspapers, turned on their computers and visited the Library's web site in droves. As a result, a record number of transactions, or "hits," were logged on LC's systems on that Sunday, Sept. 29, and usage soared again on Monday, Sept. 30.

The most dramatic impact registered in usage of the American Memory historical collections, which were the focus of the article featuring Dr. Billington and a discussion of the NDL effort to digitize millions of items by the year 2000. The number of American Memory transactions on that Sunday was 12 times higher than on the

previous Sunday. Usage on Sept. 30 was up about 80 percent over that of the previous Monday.

This pattern of usage appears to indicate that access to the Library's historical collections is primarily via home computers.

"We were thrilled with the public's reaction to the *Parade* article," said LC Public Affairs Officer Jill D. Brett. "With the help of national media exposure, the National Digital Library Program is reaching millions of the Library's constituents across the country."

The legislative information system, THOMAS, experienced three times the number of transactions on Sept. 29 compared to THOMAS usage the previous Sunday. THOMAS usage on Monday, Sept. 30, doubled that for a normal weekday. While visiting the Library's home page, users can easily click on to THOMAS.

Overall usage of the Library's World Wide Web offerings (which includes THOMAS and American Memory) was also six times higher on Sept. 29 than the previous Sunday, and more than twice as high on Sept. 30 as on an average week day.

Reduced response time as a result of this unprecedented amount of traffic no doubt caused consternation among some users. Among them was Laura Campbell, director of the National Digital Library Program, who was attempting to demonstrate the system during the peak period. "I tried

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Number of Transactions

	Sunday, Sept. 29	Sunday, Sept. 22
World Wide Web	670,729	100,267
THOMAS	66,046	18,316
American Memory	337,620	27,628
	Monday, Sept. 30	Monday, Sept. 23
World Wide Web	670,696	288,988
THOMAS	225,391	111,795
American Memory	152,829	85,495

The Library's Learning Page is jam-packed with information for students and educators.

The Learning Page

The National Digital Library Program of the Library of Congress welcomed students to a new school year with a "Back to School Special" on the Learning Page, a site for teachers and students available on the Library of Congress World Wide Web homepage at

<http://www.loc.gov/>

The "Back to School Special" includes a new area called "Learn More About It!" Here teachers and students will find pages full of helpful hints for using on-line documents, photographs, motion pictures and sound recordings available from the American Memory historical collections on the Library's website. For example, users can access illustrated guides to the U.S. history content covered by each on-line collection. Teachers will find ideas on classroom uses for electronic materials.

Working in partnership with the Center for the Book of the Library of Congress, the Learning Page also features book lists under the familiar banner "Read More About It," a hallmark of the center's literacy program. For each his-

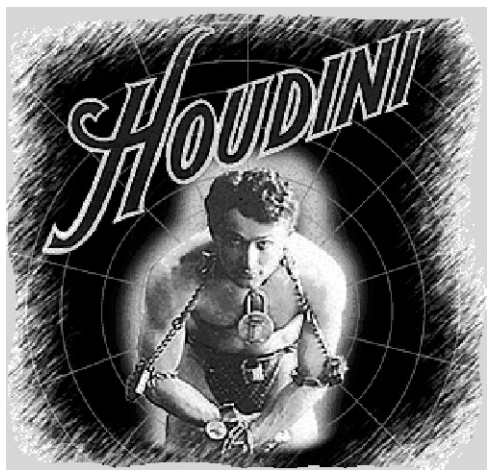
torical collection, "Read More About It" will offer general-interest and younger-reader lists.

The Learning Page's subject search guides, called Pathfinders, have also been upgraded for the "Back to School Special." Pathfinders for Events, People, Places, Time and Topics have been expanded to include new search assistance specific to education. A new Pathfinder based on historical eras has been added to the Time Pathfinder. Three new primary source collections that went on-line in July have been mapped into the Pathfinders: The Evolution of the Conservation Movement, 1850-1920; the Gottschow-Schleisner Photographs, 1932-1960, which offer images of U.S. building styles and trends; and the Theodor Horydczak Photographs, 1920-1950, which document Washington, D.C., as a developing city.

The Learning Page is featured in the latest issue of *School Library Journal* (Sept. 1996) in "History Repeats Itself: Primary Documents Go Online at the Library of Congress," by Martha Dexter, of the educational services area of the Library's National Digital Library Program.

—Guy Lamolinara
Public Affairs Office

▼ Now on-line:
Houdini—
"The Genius of
Escape Who
Will Startle
and Amaze"—
gave his
personal
collection to
the Library of
Congress.



Houdini Collection: Photos and Documents from His Life

Seventy years after the death of the modern world's most famous illusionist, photographs and documents from Houdini's legendary life appeared on the Web site of the Library of Congress.

The Houdini Collection is included in the American Variety Stage, one of two new collections available on the Library's World Wide

Web site. The other new collection is "Inside an American Factory: The Westinghouse Works."

Houdini, known during his life as the "Genius of Escape Who Will Startle and Amaze," bequeathed his collection of rare books and manuscripts on the history of magic and personal documents to the Library of Congress. Highlights from these collections are available on-line as part of the National Digital Library Program, available at <http://www.loc.gov/>.

The American Variety Stage Collection is a multimedia anthology of materials that illustrate the vibrant and diverse forms of popular

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From *The Atlantic Monthly*— Rave Review of Library Web Site

Calling the Library “one of the country’s—and the Web’s—most extraordinary resources,” “Atlantic Unbound,” an on-line site from *The Atlantic Monthly*, cited the Library’s on-line exhibitions as being “the most compelling area” of the site, “if it’s not just raw information that you’re in search of.”

“The world’s largest library is now an established presence on the Web, offering access to reference materials, catalog data, legislative texts, copyright information and much more,” the article, called “Web Citations: A Weekly Review,” said.

This is not the first time the Library’s World Wide Web initiative (<http://www.loc.gov/>) has been commended. Recently, the site was placed among the “Top 5% of All Web Sites” by Point Communications, an Internet rating service.

The *Atlantic* piece said, the “historical and cultural content these exhibits provide is first-rate, but what is most compelling is the access offered, at the click of a mouse, to a copy of the

Gettysburg Address in Lincoln’s handwriting, or a fragment of the Dead Sea Scrolls or the Soviet memo ordering the forced collectivization that led to the horrific Ukrainian famine of the 1930s.”

The Library will continue to place its major exhibitions on-line, including the upcoming showcase for the treasures of the Library, to open in spring in celebration of the centennial and completed restoration in 1997 of the Thomas Jefferson Building.



This architectural rendering is included in the Library’s on-line exhibition “Dresden: Treasures from the Saxon State Library.”

Houdini, from page 2

entertainment, especially vaudeville, that thrived during the period 1870-1920. These materials were drawn from many Library of Congress special collections and include English- and Yiddish-language playscripts, souvenir playbills and programs, and paper print films. Theater posters and sound recordings will be added in the near future.

Early motion pictures of American factories produced from the Library’s collections of rare paper prints are also available on-line. (Before the amendment of the copyright law in 1912, motion pictures were registered for copyright protection following the procedure for still photographs. Motion picture producers were required to deposit with the Library paper con-

tact prints made directly from the film negatives. These prints ranged in length from a few frames to the entire motion picture.)

The other collection, “Inside an American Factory: The Westinghouse Works” provides a glimpse of turn-of-the-century industrial life, including footage of working machinery and scenes of male and female workers performing their various duties. The Library’s web site includes background information about working conditions in these plants and other projects of the time, such as the New York subway system and the conversion into electrical power of Niagara Falls.

—Guy Lamolinara
Public Affairs Office

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Parade, from page 1

Five million rare items from the Library of Congress—including Presidential letters and diaries—are being transferred to a new website on the Internet.

Click On To Our Nation's History

BY LARRY SMITH

ON VALENTINE'S DAY, 1884, Theodore Roosevelt's wife, Alice, who had given birth two days earlier, died. His mother died the same day. Roosevelt, who was only 25, got out his leather-bound pocket diary and, in the space allotted for Feb. 14, he drew a big dark X and wrote in ink: "The light has gone out of my life."

Two days later, he made this entry: "Alice Hathaway Lee born at Cheshire Hill, July 25, 1861. I saw her first on Oct. 1878. I wooed her for over a year before I was here. We were married on Jan. 25th, 1880, and it was announced on Feb. 18th on Oct. 27th of the same year we were married. We spent three years of happiness greater than I have ever known fall in the lot of others. On Feb. 12th, 1884, her baby was born and on Feb. 14th she died in my arms. My mother had died in the same house, on the same day, but a few hours previously. On Feb. 18th they were buried together in Greenwood."

"On Feb. 17th, I christened the baby Alice Lee Roosevelt. 'For joy or for sorrow my life has now been lived out.'"

Alice Hathaway Lee—who was to become a center of culture and culture—by the U.S. Presidency, the Nobel Peace Prize for mediating the end of the Russo-Japanese War, and promotion of the construction of the Panama Canal. In 1895,



Library of Congress. With pledges of \$15 million from Congress and \$45 million from private sources, he is donating the transfer of items from the Library's collection to a website called the National Digital Library (NDL). The goal is to get 2 million items online by the

state of thought, then we have a situation in which TV, a hanger on of our times, has replaced the main of thought. Many have had a million items from the library's collection have already been "digitized," or placed online. It's a huge task. Already thousands of materials documenting 180 years of black history in America, including letters seeking the return of runaway slaves and 351 pamphlets by writers such as Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington. Civil War photographs taken by Mathew Brady. 59 early rare color pictures; 167 items documenting women's suffrage and photographs of Carl Van Vechten of celebration presented in the 1920s and '30s, as well as letters from the Depression and World War II.

In the next few years, anybody will be able to call up the Library's Presidential papers, 500,000 papers from the authorship of Margaret Mead or parts of 17 Women's Bibles, a feminist reinterpretation by the suffragist leader Elizabeth Cady Stanton and an international collection of women's culture—most for no commercial books of the 19th century. The materials were chosen with the requirements in mind. Billington says "It has got to be important, and it has got to be interesting. The main thing is that everybody gets a look at the American past. It's like finding your grandpa's letters in the attic."

"The NDL project," he added, "something that can take us back to the past John Keats called 'silence as slow time.' There's the last world's cultural time, in which most Americans

"The main thing is that everybody gets a look at the American

This Parade article created a surge of visitors to the Library of Congress Web Site. STORY STARTS PAGE 1.

three times to access the Library site, and each time I got a response that said "temporarily unavailable," Ms. Campbell said.

"We have been in the process of upgrading the RS 6000 server complex since early summer in anticipation of increased demand for access to the Library's Internet offerings," said Herbert Becker, director of Information Technology Services. "To date, three of the Library's five servers have already been upgraded from one processor to eight processors, with four times as much storage capacity," said Mr. Becker.

—Audrey Fischer

Audrey Fischer is an editor-writer with Information Technology Services.

HOLIDAY WISHES

The staff of the National Digital Library Program wishes everyone happy holidays and happy surfing in 1997.

THIS REPORT IS ON THE WEB*

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